

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An ink jet recording apparatus for discharging ink supplied from an exchangeably mounted ink tank to a recording medium through a recording head to thereby perform recording, comprising:

operating means for operating the ink jet recording apparatus and for changing a setup;

remaining amount management means for managing a remaining amount of ink in the mounted ink tank;

mode change means for, when it is determined that following the consumption of ink, the remaining amount of ink in the ink tank managed by the remaining amount management means has reached zero, switching between a first operating mode in which thereafter a recording operation using the recording head is inhibited, and a second mode in which the continuance of the recording operation is enabled regardless of the remaining amount of ink managed by the remaining amount management means; and

control means for, when performance of the recording operation is instructed in the second operating mode, permitting the performance of the recording operation after a user's manipulation through the operating means.

2. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the operating means includes on-line

switching means for switching, between an on-line state and an off-line state, the state of a connection to a host that is externally connected to the ink jet recording apparatus and wherein when the performance of the recording operation is instructed in the second operating mode, the control means sets the state of the connection to the host to the off-line state, and then permits the performance of the recording operation after the user manipulates the on-line switching means to change the state to the on-line state.

3. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 2, wherein, each time a predetermined number of copies is recorded in the second operating mode, the control means sets the connection state to the host to the on-line state.

4. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the ink tank includes a storage element for storing the remaining amount of ink that is managed by the remaining amount management means; and wherein, when the operating mode is changed to the second operating mode, the control means stores, in the storage element of the ink tank, information representing the change to the second operating mode.

5. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

storage means for storing the remaining amount of ink managed by the remaining amount management

5 means,

wherein when the operating mode is changed to the second operating mode, the control means causes said storage means to store, in the storage means of the ink jet recording apparatus, information  
10 representing the change to the second operating mode.

6. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

remaining amount detection means for detecting  
15 when the remaining amount of ink in the ink tank reaches a level equal to or lower than a predetermined amount

wherein when, in the first operating mode, the remaining amount detection means has not yet detected  
20 that the remaining amount of ink reaches a level equal to or lower than the predetermined amount, and when the amount of ink in the ink tank that has been consumed has exceeded a predetermined amount, the control means inhibits the performance of the  
25 recording operation.

7. An ink jet recording apparatus according to

claim 6, wherein the amount of ink consumed in the ink tank that is mounted is managed by the remaining amount management means.

5           8. An ink jet recording apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the predetermined amount is more than the amount of ink with which the ink tank was initially filled.

10           9. A method of controlling an ink jet recording apparatus for discharging ink supplied from an exchangeably mounted ink tank discharged to a recording medium through a recording head to thereby perform recording, comprising the steps of:

15           switching, when the remaining amount of ink to be managed is reduced, between a first operating mode in which the performance of a recording operation is inhibited and a second operating mode in which the performance of the recording operation is enabled; and

20           confirming, when performance of the recording operation is instructed in the second operating mode, whether a predetermined manipulation has been performed through operating means provided for the ink jet recording apparatus; and

25           controlling the performance of the recording operation to be permitted after the predetermined manipulation has been performed by a user.